

MEDIA RELEASE
Thursday, January 23, 2020

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Community spirit recognised with Australia Day Awards

Waratah-Wynyard municipality will give special recognition to two citizens and a community event at Council's Australia Day event in Gutteridge Gardens on Sunday, January 26.

Australia Day Awards will be given to Citizen of the Year – Leanne Griffiths; Young Citizen of the Year – Laylah Griffiths; and Community Event of the Year – Wynyard Foreshore Park Run.

Nine-year-old Laylah Griffiths, along with her grandmother Leanne, established Laylah's Gifts four years ago to help share Christmas joy with less-fortunate residents in our community and the wider North-West Coast. This Christmas they distributed approximately 500 gift boxes and bags including groceries, toys and toiletries.

With the assistance of community groups such as City Mission and Vinnies, purpose-built gift boxes and bags are also distributed to women's shelters and girls' homes.

Media attention has helped spread the word, with donations received from around Australia and their efforts have been mentioned in Parliament.

Leanne Griffiths has worked alongside her grand-daughter Laylah in establishing Laylah's Gifts. While the key focus is Christmas, Leanne and Laylah also help families throughout the year when they learn that support might be needed.

The Wynyard Foreshore Park Run unites the community every Saturday when dozens of runners join the free event. The Wynyard Foreshore Park Run was established in August 2018 and has since run for 60 consecutive Saturday mornings.

The 5km run/walk is conducted entirely by volunteers with an average of 30 participants each week. The event is part of a world-wide park-run event where people of all ages are encouraged to take part.

"We are proud and grateful for the work Laylah and Leanne are doing to help others who would otherwise go without, and to the volunteers who oversee every Wynyard Foreshore Park Run," Waratah-Wynyard Mayor Robby Walsh said.

"Australia Day is a day to celebrate our community and nation and more locally, for the Waratah-Wynyard municipality, we get the opportunity to publicly recognise those who have given back to the community with an Australia Day Award."

The Awards, along with a Citizenship Ceremony, will be held during the Australia Day Breakfast in Gutteridge Gardens.

The breakfast starts at 8am, followed by the Australia Day Awards and Citizenship ceremonies from 9am.

This year's Australia Day Ambassador and guest speaker is John Zeckendorf.

In 2010 John set himself a challenge to climb the world's seven summits. After reaching the top of peaks in Antarctica, Africa, North America, and South America, he became the first Tasmanian to reach the summit of Everest in 2017.

Along with the classic Aussie bush breakfast, pancakes and coffee will also be on offer, while the kids can enjoy the giant chess board and free face painting.

Authorised for general media distribution by Shane Crawford, General Manager, Waratah-Wynyard Council on Thursday, January 23, 2020.